Export Order and Distress Price of Tobacco

674. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item published in the Financial Express of the 17th April, 1992 under the caption "Reports on limited export of Virginia tobacco denied" ;

(b) whether Government are aware that farmers are selling tobacco at distress prices ;

(c) what steps have been taken by Government to ensure fair prices for farmers ; and

(d) whether Government are taking active steps to obtain enhanced export orders for tobacco ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) This year there has been a decline in the average price in the auctions. As on 17th April, 1992, at the end of the 10th week of auctions, the average price was Rs. 30.22 per kg as against Rs. 32.66 per kg during the corresponding period last year. This is against the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of about Rs. 16 per kg fixed by the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices and the Minimum Guaranteed Price (MGP) assured by the trade of Rs. 18.50 to Rs. 21.50 per kg.

(c) and (d) Taking note of the resentment of the tobacco growers, the Government advised the Tobacco Board to immediately hold an emergency meeting of the Board to take stock of the situation and to take remedial steps. The Chairman of the Tobacco Board has impressed upon the traders including the exporters and the manufacturers of cigarettes the need for offering remunerative prices to the farmers in the overall interest of the industry. Major buyers including the Russians have also been approached to step up their purchases.

India Trade Promotion Organisations Participation in Fairs Abroad

675. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the India Trade Promotion Organisation propose to participate in fairs abroad in 1992-93 ;

(b) if so, what are the names of countries and the details of fairs in which India Trade Promotion Organisation propose to participate ;

(c) what are the details of commodities which ITPO propose to display in each of these fairs ;

(d) what are the details of expenditure on each fair to be incurred by ITPO ;

(e) what arrangements have been made for imparting training to the persons participating in these exhibitions ; and

(f) which other countries are participating in these fairs ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) to (d) India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) will be organising participation in 35 events viz. 15 general international fairs, 18 specialised commodity fairs and 2 Indian Exhibitions. In addition, ITPO will also be organising participation in 7-8 international fairs on self financing and cost recovery basis. A statement showing names of the events, names of the countries, suggestive products for display and proposed expenditure on each event in foreign exchange and Indian currency is enclosed. [See Appendix CLXIII, Annexure No. 9].

(e) The participants are invited for pre-fair meetings and general free dialogue for familiarisation with commercial and technical details. ITPO does not conduct any regular training programme as such in this regard.

(f) Normally more than 30 countries participate in international trade fairs/ exhibitions where ITPO is participating.